March comes in like a lion

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3月のライオン

Chapter 13

God's Child (PART 3)

When I think back on it,

...AH,

OKAY.

Come over.

this girl,

YAY!

Hina-chan,

is young, but kind.

She's also very level-headed.

SFX: CHUU (SLUURP)

What the heck...

a middle school student worrying about a high school student...

But,

Everyone is doing their best, and yet...

and helps out with the confectionery as well as her aunt's store in Ginza.

It's the same with Akari-san, who takes good care of the whole family

help with the chores, and also help around the store.

Hina-chan has to take care of her little sister,

Speaking of which...

SFX: ZUBO (SLURP)

How shameful...

OH,

KAWA-MOTO.

Ah... From that time...

HINA-CHAN?

SFX: KRA (BLUSH)

SFX: ZUGO? (SLURP?)

SFX: CHUU (SLURP)

SFX: BEKO (CRUMPLE)

AH.

UM... ARE YOU A FRIEND?

HERE, HAVE MY SEAT.

I'm just about to leave...

Looks like he's trying his best to get out of the way.

The one that Hina-chan likes...

SFX: ZUHOHOHO (SIGH-AH-AH-HUH)

SFX: BYUU (SQUEEZE)

SFX: BYUUU (SQUEEEEZE)

Ah!

SFX: BAKUSHU (EXPLODE)

KYAA!

Kyaa!
pitter patter pitter patter...
(*Ran to the toilet)

...Whoa...
This... This is awkward...

SFX: DOSSHII (UMPHS/OWS)

Almost 180 cm

UM...

UM...

Wh... What to talk about...

*I've never talked to an athlete before...?

SFX: SHIIN..... (SILENCE)

SFX: RUNRUNRUN (TRIBUTE) SFX: SUTOW..... (GLIDE.....)

UM,

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

AH!

UH...

AND YOUR FIRST NAME?

IT'S REI. KIRIYAMA REI.

MY NAME IS KIRIYAMA.

Why are you using keigo? (lol)

He's staring... staring straight at me?

SFX: JII (STARE)

SO TALL... SO SCARY...

.....

I AM TAKAHASHI YUUSUKE.

NICE TO MEET YOU,

EH?

SFX: PEKORI (BOW)

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT

WHO BECAME A SHOGI PRO...

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT!

SFX: MWA (SMOOCH)

I'VE ALWAYS PLAYED BASEBALL,

HOPING TO BECOME A PRO ONE DAY.

BUT, SHOULD I JUST RELY ON BASEBALL JUST LIKE THIS AND BE RECOMMENDED FOR ADMISSION TO A MUNICIPAL HIGH SCHOOL?

OR SHOULD I GO TO ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL WHERE I HAVE A REAL CHANCE OF MAKING IT TO KOSHIEN? I WAS UNCERTAIN.

THEN MY FATHER TOLD ME ABOUT YOU.

IN THIS WORLD, THERE ARE PEOPLE, LIKE THIS KID WHO HAS BEEN SURE OF HIS DIRECTION IN LIFE EVER SINCE HE WAS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT AND HAS BECAME A PRO SHOGI PLAYER.

IF YOU WANT TO BECOME A PRO, YOU MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISION.

BECAUSE OF THAT, I WAS ABLE TO MAKE UP MY MIND ABOUT GOING TO A HIGH SCHOOL IN SHIKOKU.

THE COACH WHO LOOKED AFTER ME DURING A JUNIOR TOURNAMENT INVITED ME THERE.

BUT, I WANTED TO ASK YOU,

ONE YEAR AFTER YOU BECAME A PRO SHOGI PLAYER, YOU ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL AGAIN.

UM...

WHY DID YOU DO THAT?

I realized that much.

this was a question not to be answered offhandedly, but with sincere words...

Looking at his serious expression,

I DON'T REGRET DECIDING ON THE DIRECTION OF MY LIFE SO EARLY ON...

I LIKE TO STUDY,

BUT I CAN'T FIT IN.

...UM...

I HAVE TROUBLE ASSOCIATING WITH OTHERS.

THERE REALLY ISN'T ANYTHING I'M GOOD AT BESIDES SHOGI.

But...

How could I convey it properly?

T-This is to beginning to feel embarrassing... I... What am I saying?

Like this... To a middle school student I just met...

Oh... man...

I WANTED TO HAVE THE MEMORY OF "NOT RUNNING AWAY"...

BUT, PER-HAPS,

I THINK.

MEMORIES OF "RUNNING AWAY" AND "SLACKING OFF",

EVEN THOUGH ONLY YOU WOULD KNOW...

EH ?

I SEE...

.....

He got me.

YOU WANTED TO GET RID OF SITUATIONS LIKE THAT . RIGHT?

SO,

EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T SAY IT WELL.

BUT,

IF YOU HAVE EVEN JUST A SMALL MEMORY OF HAVING GIVEN INTO THOUGHTS LIKE "RUNNING AWAY" OR "SLACKING OFF",

YOU WOULD END UP THINKING THAT "NO... BUT THEN, I SLACKED OFF THAT TIME...", AND THEN YOU CAN'T DO IT

DURING CRITICAL MOMENTS, MY COACH WOULD CONSTANTLY ENCOURAGE ME WITH "BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!"

I kept feeling that...

YEAH

Oh crap.

If I'm not careful...

What is this?

I'm so happy.

It felt like my tears would inadvertently flow. I was uneasy.

BUT I...

AH.

OH.

wanted to talk a little bit more.

AH!

HEY, TAKA-HASHI!

SORRY WE'RE LATE, LET'S GO!

SFX: WAI WAI (HEY HEY)

IF YOU COULD GET IN TOUCH THROUGH KAWAMOTO-SAN ..

HINA-CHA...

EH? CAN I?

UM.

IF YOU DON'T MIND, LET'S CHAT AGAIN.

SFX: PEKO (BOW)

SFX: NEKA. (WORK.) SFX: SUTOH (SLIDE)

Yeah!

Y-

AH.

ALL RIGHT.

I'LL BE TROUBLING YOU THEN, KAWAMOTO.

SFX: PEKO

HE SEEMS KIND OF COOL.

Right!?

He's very level-headed.

So,

WHAT DID YOU TWO TALK ABOUT?

EH,

AH, UM. .

Thank you,

Hina-chan!

Kiri-yama-kun!

Let's see, let's see

I TURNED ALL THE RICE INTO SHIO-MUSUBI. THERE'S ALSO TEMPURA, BOILED EGGS, AND PICKLED VEGETABLES ..

SORRY

Thank you...

Rei-chan, thanks!

Bye!

Thank you for the meal!

So bloated

My time has come

That night,

the warm dinner and the many things that happened during the day

floated around in my tummy,

making it difficult for me to sleep,

SFX: TOPUN... TOPUN... DRIP... DRIP...

the smell of water and the sound of waves

climbed all the way up to my room on the sixth floor.

...All of a sudden,

so I solved shogi problems until deep into the night.

if a day would come when I could ask for advice from someone else...

Just like he had asked me,

I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU,

Someday...

The stories being told on the other side of the goal...

...Yes.

The landscape reflected in those eyes...

the things that exist beyond the storm...

All these things I still don't know.

Chapter 13 end

NOTES from the translators

Page 46

Keigo is a form of polite, respectful Japanese speech which conveys formality, social distance, or deference between the participants of a conversation.

Page 47

Koshien refers to two annual high school baseball tournaments played nationwide culminating in a final showdown at Hanshin Koshien Stadium in Nishinomiya. The two are commonly known as the Spring Koshien and the Summer Koshien, and playing at them is known to be a door to the professional level. Following Koshien is nationally popular, on par with professional baseball.

Page 52

Shio-musubi are salted omusubi (onigiri).